

Remarks

Applicants thank the Examiner for the careful consideration given this application. Reconsideration of this application is requested in view of the following remarks.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 7-14, and 17-39 are now pending in this application, of which Claims 1, 12, 22, and 31 are independent claims. Claims 3, 5, 6, 15, and 16 have been cancelled without prejudice. Claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 12-14, 17, 22, 23, 30-32, and 39 have been amended (most of these amendments were to address minor errors and/or preferences and/or to place dependent claims in proper form given amendments to the claims from which they depend).

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication of allowable subject matter in Claim 16. Applicants have now amended all of the independent claims (Claims 1, 12, 22, and 31) to incorporate limitations of, or similar to, those of Claim 16.

At page 2, the Office Action objects to Claims 12, 14, 17, 22, 30, 31, and 39 based on minor informalities. All of these informalities have been addressed in the amendments to these claims.

At page 3, the Office Action rejects Claims 6 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The rejection of Claim 6 is now moot in view of its cancellation. The rejection of Claim 12 has been addressed in the amendments to Claim 12.

At pages 3-18, the Office Action rejects Claims 1-4, 6, 7, 9-14, 17, 19-22, 24-26, 28, 30-35, 37, and 39 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being unpatentable over Heinonen et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0112789). At pages 20-24, the Office

Action rejects Claims 5, 8, 15, 18, 23, and 32 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heinonen et al. in view of Rockwell (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/011699). At pages 25-26, the Office Action rejects Claims 27 and 36 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heinonen et al. in view of Bjorklund et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0046184). At pages 26-27, the Office Action rejects Claims 29 and 38 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heinonen et al. in view of Belmont (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0127204). The rejections of Claims 3, 5, 6, and 15 are rendered moot by their cancellation. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections of the remaining claims for at least the following reasons.

As noted above, all of the independent claims, Claims 1, 12, 22, and 31, have been amended to incorporate the limitations of, or limitations similar to those of, Claim 16 (now canceled, which was indicated as containing allowable subject matter. It is, therefore, respectfully submitted that all remaining claims contain this allowable subject matter and are, therefore, allowable over the cited references.

Applicants may not have presented all possible arguments or have refuted the characterizations of either the claims or the prior art as found in the Office Action. However, the lack of such arguments or refutations is not intended to act as a waiver of such arguments or as concurrence with such characterizations.

Conclusion

Applicants believe that the above remarks address all of the grounds for objection and rejection and that the application is in condition for allowance. Applicants, therefore, respectfully request prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply and reconsideration of this application.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Respectfully submitted,

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